Luisa Piccarreta, the LDDW*
(*Little Daughter of the Divine Will)

NOTEBOOK OF CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

From the letters of Saint Annibale Maria Di Francia to Luisa Piccarreta, the Little Daughter of the Divine Will

J.M.J.A.
Trani, August 28, 1926

Most esteemed one in the Lord,

I received the 4th little volume. I am skimming through the 3rd one and I noticed where it begins to speak about the Divine Will.

I read the exaltation of the Cross, that of Holy Humility, and that of Holy Purity.

Volume 7 has been reviewed completely.

Sister M. Cristina, currently Vicar of this House, has the 5th and the 6th.

Pray to the Lord that He would inspire us on how to do the publication, and do it completely according to His Divine Volition. Amen..

My thought is that the first print should be done in Oria, and that afterwards the whole printing should pass to Messina, where I reside, under my own eyes.

In the meantime, continue the 15th in black, in which You started to write what happened to You during your infancy, childhood and youth. Write everything. Write

also a faithful and complete narration of the illness - that is, your being bedridden; when it was, how it happened, in what year, the oppositions of the Bishops, of the Confessors, etc., etc.

Also, in volume 19 write everything - everything that Our Lord reveals, even tiny things in passing.

Everything for Holy Obedience, great Lady, for the Glory of God, for your mortification and for the good of souls. Be careful not to distort or hide anything!

I bless You in the Lord with your dear ones, and I say

Yours in J.C.

Canonico A.M. Di Francia

J.M.J.A.
Trani, August 30, 1926

Most esteemed one in the Lord Jesus, Our Beloved and only Good!

Your Lady, which is Holy Obedience, wants you to write everything that you remember of your childhood, infancy and youth as far as the blessed intimate relation with the Divine Lover, adding the beginning of the illness that confines you to bed....

You must also write how this story began, and this great mortification of needing the priest every day in order to be released from the drowsiness in the morning....

J.M.J.A.
October 15, 1926

Blessed daughter in J.C., Our Highest Good,

His Excellency Msgr. Archbishop of Trani, to whom you belong, gave me jurisdiction over you as far as your writings and their publication - that is, to handle you, and to dispose the publication as I believe is right (his words).

These faculties embrace everything you have written until now, and everything you will write in the future....

Therefore, in view of the Divine Will which manifests Itself here, and which many times has equally manifested Itself, I, in the Most Holy Name of Jesus and with the authority which has been conferred to me by your legitimate Ecclesiastical Superior, give you absolute and strong obedience to write precisely, day by day, night by night, time by time, everything that happens between you and Jesus! – be they even the most intimate things!...

You will say to me: but it is Jesus that sometimes does not make Himself seen, and does not say anything to me; then, what can I write? You will write of your suffering day by day, even just a few words. But the obedience regards especially when Jesus speaks to you - of neglecting not even a comma....

NOTEBOOK OF CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

J.M.J.[1]
FIAT
July 15, 1926

My Jesus, my Love, my Celestial Mama and Sovereign Queen, come to my aid, take my poor heart in your hands. Don't you see how it bleeds because of the hard struggle of having to start all over again, to tell of my poor existence - of my childhood? At any cost would I want to escape this most painful and hard sacrifice, and even more painful because unexpected; but a new obedience comes out into the field to torture my poor and insignificant existence. Jesus, Mama, come to my aid, otherwise I feel that my will would want to enter the field again, in order to have life and to be able to say a curt "no" to the one who commands me. Ah! Jesus, will You perhaps permit that I have anything to do with my will, after You have kept it bound at your feet with so much jealousy for so long, as gift and triumph of your little daughter?

They imposed it on me to pray in order to know from You, whether I have to do it or not; and instead of being with me, You told me: *"This will serve to make*

[1] Jesus, Mary and Joseph

known the land which the Sun of my Will was to illumine, in order to form Its Kingdom."

Ah, Jesus, what do I care of making my little land known! And You should care that your Will be known; isn't that true, O Jesus? But Jesus kept silent and disappeared; and with all the intense bitterness of my soul I say: *'Fiat! Fiat!'*, and I begin:

So, at the beginning I will say what I have been told by my own family.

I was born in 1865, on April 23, Sunday "in Albis[2]", in the morning; on the same evening I was baptized[3]. My mother said that I was born upside down, though she did not suffer at all during labor; and, in fact, in the encounters and circumstances of my poor existence I usually say: 'I was born upside down[4]! It is right that my life be upside down compared to the life of other creatures.'

I remember that during the tender age of three or four, up to about the age of ten, I was of fearful

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[2] The first Sunday after Easter, today Feast of the Divine Mercy. It is noteworthy that 70 years later Our Lord asked, through Saint Faustina Kowalska, that the feast of Divine Mercy be celebrated on that Sunday. And still 60 years later, precisely on April 23, 1995, His Holiness Pope John Paul II solemnly proclaimed for the whole Catholic world that Divine Mercy be celebrated on this Sunday forever. Obtaining it on behalf of men was Luisa's first mission as a victim.

[3] In the Church called "Chiesa Matrice", Santa Maria Maggiore, in Corato, province of Bari, where Luisa was born.

[4] Even her death was upside down compared to the death of others, as we can see from the extraordinary phenomena that happened to her body, when she died on March 4, 1947.

temperament, and the fear was such that I could neither be alone nor take one step by myself. But the reason for this was that, even from the age of three, at night I always had frightening dreams. I dreamed of the devil, who gave me such fright as to make me tremble. Many times I dreamed that he wanted to take me with himself, and he would pull me strongly, and I would make all efforts to escape. In the same dream I would break out into a cold sweat, I would hide, I would run into the arms of my mom. Then, the following day, I would remain with the impression of those dreams, and with such fear, as if the devil was going to come out from all sides.

Now, I believe that this did good to me, because from that very tender age I recited many 'Ave Maria' and 'Pater noster' to all the Saints whose names I knew, in order to obtain the grace of not dreaming of the devil; and if anyone mentioned another Saint whom I didn't know, immediately I would add a 'Pater' if he was male, or an 'Ave' if she was female, because I said that if I did not honor them all, they would let me dream of the devil. I remember that, even from that age, I always recited the seven 'Ave' to the Sorrowful Mama; so I had a great length of 'Pater' and 'Ave Maria'; and therefore, while the other little girls and my little sisters were playing, I would remain a short distance from them - or together with them because I was afraid - but I would not participate in their innocent games in order to recite my long series of 'Ave' and 'Pater noster[5]'.... I also

[5] Hail Mary and Our Father - Luisa writes : "Pater nostri".

remember that sometimes I dreamed of the Virgin, who cast the devil away from me; and once She said to me: "My daughter, cry, for my Son has died." I was shaken and I compassionated Her; but this rendered me unhappy. When I reached a more capable age in which I was able to do my meditation and to read, I could not be by myself because of the fear, and therefore I could not do what I wanted.

Now, after I became a daughter of Mary at the age of eleven, one day, as I wanted to pray and meditate, I was caught up by fear, and I was about to run to my family, when I felt a strength in my interior holding me back, and in the depth of my soul I heard a voice telling me: *"Why do you fear? There is your Angel by your side, there is Jesus in your heart, there is the Celestial Mama who keeps you under Her mantle. Why do you fear then? Who is stronger: your guardian Angel, your Jesus, your Celestial Mama, or the infernal enemy? Therefore, do not run away, but stay and pray, and do not fear.*"

This voice[6] in my interior gave me so much strength, courage and firmness, that the fear went away, and every time I was caught up by fear, I heard the same voice in my interior again, and I felt myself as though being led by the hand, by my Angel, by the Sovereign Queen and by sweet Jesus. I felt triumphant in their midst, in a way that I acquired such courage, that all the fear went away; more so, since the frightening dreams

[6] These "voices" can probably be considered the first supernatural manifestations in Luisa's life.

ceased completely. In this way I was able to be alone, walk alone, go to the garden by myself when we stayed at the farm house[7]; while before, if I did go, I would run away if I saw even just a tree branch moving, because I thought that the devil was up there.

I remember that one day, recalling the fear of my young age, the many dreams about the enemy, which rendered my childhood unhappy, I said to Jesus: 'What for, my Love - having spent my young age with so much fear, with so many bad dreams that made me tremble and sweat, and embittered an age so tender? I could not understand anything, nor do I think that the enemy had any purpose, given that my age was so small.' And Jesus said to me: *"My daughter, the enemy had an inkling of something about you - that I could use you in something for my great Glory, and that he would receive a great defeat, never before received; more so, since he saw that, as much as he tried, he could not make any affection or thought less pure penetrate into you, because I kept the doors closed to him, and he could find no way to enter. In seeing this, he became enraged, and unable to do anything else, he tried to terrify you with dreams of fear and fright. More so since, not knowing the reason for my great designs upon you which were to serve for the destruction of his kingdom, he came to attention in order*

[7] The farm of the family: an agricultural farm about 27 Km. from Corato, called "Torre Disperata", in the highest point of the Murge (*Murge plateau lies within Apulia*).

to investigate the cause, with the hope of being able to harm you in some way."

Our Lord has been very good to me, giving me good parents[8], who were most attentive not to letting us hear even one word of blasphemy or less honest. They loved me, but with a dignified and serious love. I remember that, when I was a little child, my father never took me in his arms, and that I never gave him kisses, or received them from him. I do not remember having kissed my mother either; and when I was grown up, and was bedridden, when she had to go to the farm house and be absent for many months, on taking leave of me, my mom would make the motion of wanting to kiss me; and in seeing this, I would kiss her hand before she could do that; and so she abstained from that expression, all maternal.

Daddy and mom were angels of purity and of modesty. They were generous with their employees: fraud, deceit, had no place in our home. Their custody was such that never did they entrust us to strangers, but kept us always with them. I hope that blessed Jesus

[8] Luisa's parents were Vito Nicola Piccarreta and Rosa Tarantini, both from Corato. For their marriage there was a need to receive a dispensation, having some degree of kinship. From their marriage were born five daughters: Maria, Rachele, Filomena, Luisa and Angela. The latter always lived with Luisa and, like Luisa, she did not marry. Her parents died in 1907, with a few days difference: her mother died on March 19, and three weeks later, also her father died (*see BOOK OF HEAVEN – Volume 7 - March 13 and May 9, 1907*). These chapters clearly show how strongly Luisa loved her parents.

rewarded so much virtue, by giving them the Celestial Fatherland as dwelling.

I also remember that I was of shy temperament, and if relatives or other people came to visit us, I would run upstairs so as not to be found, or I would hide behind a bed and pray; and I would come out only when they would call me and tell me that they had left. When my mom would go to visit some relatives and wanted to take me with her, I cried because I did not want to go; so, I and one of my little sisters, with almost the same temperament, were content with remaining alone and locked in, rather than going out. This shyness prevented me from taking part in anything - either feasts or amusements, even innocent ones - which were usual among families. I was the sacrificed one of shyness; and if my parents forced me, I felt crucified because shyness rendered all things alien to me.

As I remembered all this, which somehow rendered my childhood unhappy, sweet Jesus said to me: *"My daughter, even the shyness with which I surrounded you in your tender age was one of my greatest jealousies of love for you. I wanted no one to enter into you, whether the world or people; I wanted to render you apart from everyone. I did not want you to participate or take pleasure in anything, because, having established from that time that I was to form in you the Kingdom of the Supreme Fiat, and since you were to take part in Its feasts and in the joys that are in It, it was right that you enjoy no other feast, and that you remain empty of the*

pleasures and amusements which are on earth. Aren't you happy?" But even though I was shy and fearful, I was of lively and happy temperament: I ran, I jumped, and I even did some impertinences.

Then, at the age of about twelve, a new period of my life began: I began to hear the interior voice of Jesus, especially at Communion. I had First Communion[9] at nine, and on the same day I received the Sacrament of Holy Confirmation.

Not rarely did Jesus make Himself heard in my interior when I received Holy Communion. Sometimes I would remain several hours on my knees, almost motionless, after Communion, and I would hear the interior voice speaking, and sometimes reproaching me if I had not been good and attentive. And if sometimes during the course of the day I had been a little distracted, oh! how it would reprimand me, and would end by saying: "*Yet, you say that you love Me; and where is this love of yours*?" I would feel myself dying in hearing this, and would promise to be more attentive; and Jesus

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[9] It was the Sunday "in Albis" of 1874. Luisa had been preparing for a long time; she had attended the Church "Chiesa Madre" to better learn the catechetical notions. In the examinations she showed herself to be older than her age, and she was awarded the prize. The Archpriest, Don Filippo Furio, addressed the little new communicants warm words of faith and love towards the Eucharistic Prisoner. Little Luisa wept with tenderness and, with great devotion, she approached for the first time to receive the One who was to make her His Victim and Living Host. The Archbishop had come from Trani (in Apulia, it is one of the capital cities of the Province of Barletta-Andria-Trani) and took the opportunity to administer the Holy Sacrament of Confirmation to those who had proved to be good and prepared: Luisa was among the first (News taken from a draft of the "Biography", written by Mons. D'Oria, Archpriest of Corato).

would add: "*I will see, I will see if it is true... Words are not enough for Me; I want facts.*"

Communion became my predominant passion. In It I centralized all my affections. I was certain to hear Our Lord speaking; and how much it cost me to be without It, because I was forced by my family to go with them to the farm house, and I had to be many months without Mass and without Communion. How many times I burst into tears in seeing trees, flowers, the whole Creation...! I said to myself: 'The works of Jesus are around me; only Jesus is not with me. O please! speak to me, you flower, you sun, you heavens, you crystal clear water flowing in our little pond - speak to me about Jesus. You are the works of His hands, give me news of Him!' And it seemed that all things spoke to me about Him. Each created thing spoke to me about each quality of Jesus; and I, crying because I could not receive the One whom all things loved, and they could narrate so well the beauty, the love, the goodness of Jesus - I wept and reached the point of falling ill.

Also during the meditation I would hear the voice of Jesus, but sometimes it was missing; but at Communion, never. And how many times, while meditating, I would remain two or three hours without being able to detach. As I would read the point and would pause, I would hear the voice of Jesus in my interior, who, acting as Teacher, explained the meditation to me. Even from that time, in my interior, lovable Jesus gave me lessons on the cross, on meekness, on obedience, on His hidden life.... Talking

about His hidden life, I remember that He said to me: *"My daughter, your life must be in our midst in the house of Nazareth. If you work, if you pray, if you take food, if you walk, you must give one hand to Me, the other to our Mama, and your gaze to Saint Joseph, to see whether your acts correspond to ours, so as to be able to say: first I make my model based on what Jesus, the Celestial Mama and Saint Joseph do, and then I follow it. According to the model you have made, I want to be repeated by you in my hidden life; I want to find in you the works of my Mama, those of my dear Saint Joseph, and my own works."*

I remained confused, and said to Him: 'My beloved Jesus, I don't know how to do it.' And He: *"My daughter, courage, do not lose heart; if you do not know how to do it, ask Me to teach you, and immediately I will teach you. I will tell you the way we did it - my intentions, the continuous love among the three of us; how I, as sea, and they, as little rivers, were always swollen, in such a way that one overflowed into the other; so much so, that we had little time to talk to one another, so much were we absorbed in love. Do you see how behind you are? Much do you have to do in order to reach us; you need much silence and attention, for I do not want you behind, but in our midst."*

So, when I didn't know what to do, I asked Jesus, and He taught me in my interior. I tried almost always, as much as I could, to withdraw from my family in order to be alone, to maintain silence. I would take my work and

would ask my mom for permission to go upstairs, and she would grant it to me. So, my mind was in the house of Nazareth, and I would look now at one, now at the other, and I felt confounded in seeing them so attentive in their humble works, so absorbed in the flames of love, which rose so high that their works remained enflamed and transformed into love[10]. And I, amazed, thought to myself: 'They love so much - and what is my love? Can I say that my works, my prayers, the food I take, the steps I take, are flames that rise to the Throne of God, and form a river that overflows into the sea of Jesus?' In seeing that it was not so, I would remain afflicted, and Jesus, in my interior, would say to me: *"What's wrong? Do not afflict yourself; little by little you will make it. I will be over you; and you - follow Me and do not fear."*

If I wanted to say everything that passed in my interior during my childhood, I would be too long; more so, since in the first Volume written by me - without specifying the period, whether before or after[11], whether I was younger or I was older - there is a mention of the crafting of grace in the depth of my soul, because so I was told: that it did not matter if I didn't put the order of age - what had happened before, or what happened later

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[10] This is the answer to the much debated question: Martha or Mary? Active life or contemplative life?

[11] It is true that in the first Volume (*Book of Heaven – The call of the creature to the Order, the Place and the Purpose for which he was created by God*) she does not initially follow an order, because it begins with the Novena of Holy Christmas, when she was 17 years old, but then the narrative takes place in a fairly clear chronological order.

- as long as I would say what had passed in me. More so, since after many years, it was difficult for me to maintain the order of what had passed in my interior. So now, in order not to make repetitions, I move forward.

I remember that, as a girl, I had almost a yearning for becoming a nun, and since I went to school with nuns[12], I felt an affection a little pronounced for them; but I loved them because I wanted to be like one of them. However, in my interior I felt reproached because of this affection, and while I would promise to love no one else but Jesus, I would fall again, and Jesus would return to give me bitter reproaches[13]. This was the only affection I remember, which I felt in my life in a special way, since after that I no longer felt in love with anyone. What tyranny a natural affection is - be it even an innocent one - for the poor human heart! I remember it

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[12] Luisa was 11 or 12 years old; she had only done the first or second grade with the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (called "the Sisters of Ivrea").

[13] What do Jesus and the conscience themselves reproach her? That attachment to the creature object of love, in which Jesus is put aside, a love separated from His Love. See, in the writings of Luisa: *"….only then is Charity perfect when it is done for the sole purpose of pleasing Me"* (Book of Heaven – Volume 2 - May 12, 1899); *"…that with my Humanity, united to my Divinity, from two natures I formed one and I rendered them inseparable, because I not only satisfied Divine Justice, but I operated the salvation of men. And so that all would assume this obligation to love God and neighbor, I not only made them one, but I reached the point of making of it a divine precept"* (Book of Heaven - Volume 3 - June 18, 1900); *"The prerogatives of love are three: constant love without end, strong love, and love of God and neighbor bound together".* (Book of Heaven – Volume 4 - September 10, 1902); *"… the love of God and the love of neighbor, from two she makes them one, rectifying everything for God. So must the soul be if she wants to please Me."* (Book of Heaven - Volume 6 - March 4, 1904), etc. It is a passion, because it makes you suffer.

with terror; the internal reproaches crucified me; it seemed to me that my affection kept Jesus crucified, and that Jesus, in return, crucified me; and therefore I did not enjoy true peace, because the nature of human love is to wage war against a poor heart. To have peace and to love people in a special way, does not exist in the world; and if it does, it means having no conscience, be it even with a holy or indifferent intention.

But blessed Jesus put a stop to it soon, and here is how. One morning I asked mom to let me go to visit Mother Superior, and I obtained this with hardship and sacrifice. As I went there, I asked for Mother Superior, and after a while I got the answer that she was busy and could not come. I was wounded on hearing this. I went to church and poured out my pain with Jesus; and from this, He took the occasion to make me stop. He spoke to me of His Love, of the inconstancy of the love of creatures, and of how He absolutely wanted me to stop it, telling me: *"When a heart is not empty, I refuse it, nor can I begin the crafting which I have planned to do in the depth of the soul."* But who can say everything that He told me in my interior? I remember that it ended there, and my heart remained intrepid, no longer able to love anyone.

So, I always prayed Jesus to let me become a nun, and I often asked Him, when I felt Him in my interior, whether my religious vocation was going to be fulfilled. And Jesus would assure me, telling me: *"Yes, I will make you content; you will see that you will be a nun."*

I remained all content in being assured by Jesus, and I tried to dispose my family in order to obtain their consent; but they were opposed, especially my mom. She reached the point of crying, and she told me that she would make me content if I wanted to become a cloistered nun; but to be an active nun - she would have never let me win.

However, to tell the truth, I wanted to become an active nun, because those I knew had been my teachers[14]; but my long illness[15] came, and put an end to my vocation. Many times I lamented with Jesus and said to Him: 'Yet, You told me a lie, You made fun of me, promising that I was going to become a nun.' And many times Jesus assured me that He was telling me the truth, saying to me:

"I can neither deceive nor make fun.

The call which I made upon you was more special: who, in becoming a nun, even in the most strict religious lives[16]*, cannot walk, cannot take air, cannot enjoy anything? And how many times in religious orders do they let the little world in, and they amuse themselves magnificently? And I remain as though aside. Ah! my*

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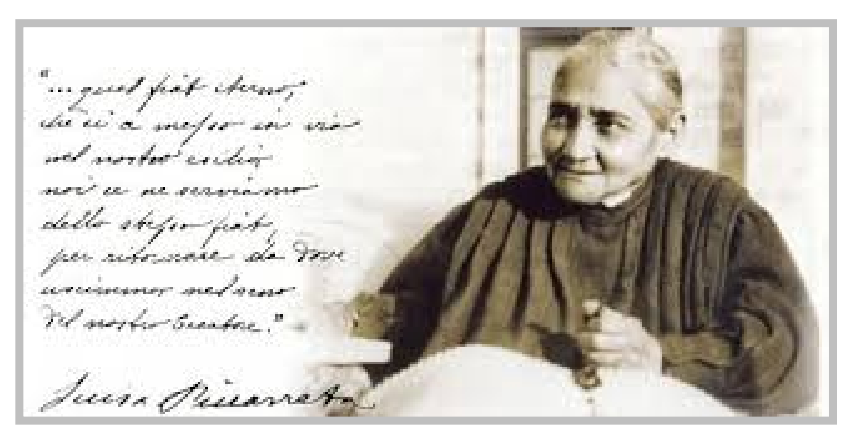
[14] She was again disappointed by these nuns; then she went to Trani, with the intention of asking for admission to the cloistered Poor Clares of the monastery of San Giovanni. She was not accepted, because her mother spoke of her precarious physical health. Luisa was about 14 years old.

[15] The doctors could never say anything about what Luisa calls "illness"..., that kept her in bed for 64 years, until her death.

[16] That is to say: Religious Congregations.

daughter, when I call to a state, I know how to fulfill my call.

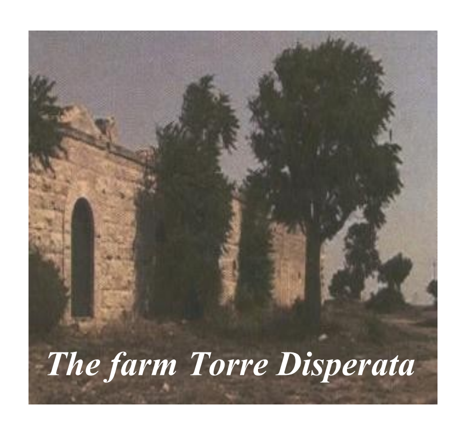
The place is indifferent to Me[17]*; the religious habit tells Me nothing, when in substance the soul is what she should be if she had entered religious life. And this is why I tell you that you are and will be the true little nun of my Heart.*"



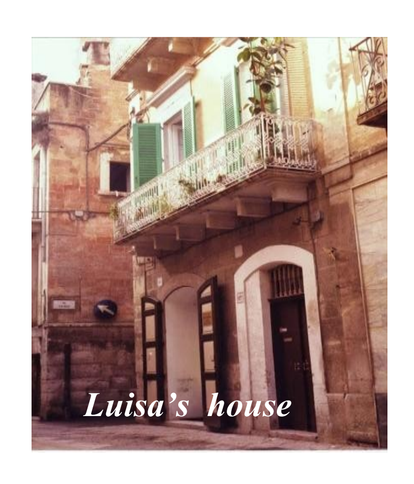
Luisa Piccarreta

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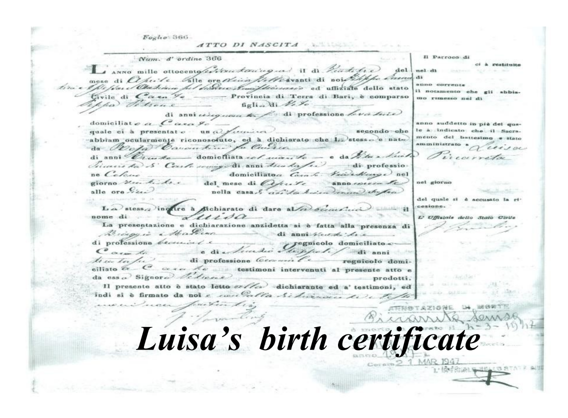
[17] Both in Corato and elsewhere, wherever one can live in the Divine Will; but one must live in It as Luisa did, inwardly. It is possible to live in It at every state of life and in every place. *"Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem... But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and Truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and Truth"* (John 4:21 and 23-24).



The farm Torre Disperata



Luisa's house



Foglio 366

ATTO DI NASCITA

Num. d' ordine 366

L'anno mille ottocento [illegible] il dì [illegible] del mese di Aprile alle ore [illegible] avanti di noi [illegible] ed uffiziale dello stato Civile di Corato — Provincia di Terra di Bari, è comparso [illegible] figlio di Vito [illegible] di anni [illegible] di professione [illegible] domiciliato a Corato — quale ci à presentato una femmina secondo che abbiam ocularmente riconosciuto, ed à dichiarato che la stessa è nata da Rosa Tarantino fu Andrea di anni [illegible] domiciliata col marito — e da Vito Nicola Piccarreta fu Carlo coniuge di anni [illegible] di professione Colono domiciliato a Corato [illegible] nel giorno [illegible] del mese di Aprile anno corrente alle ore [illegible] nella casa [illegible]

La stessa inoltre à dichiarato di dare alla bambina il nome di Luisa

La presentazione e dichiarazione anzidetta si è fatta alla presenza di [illegible] di anni [illegible] di professione [illegible] regnicolo domiciliato a Corato e di [illegible] di anni [illegible] di professione [illegible] regnicolo domiciliato a Corato testimoni intervenuti al presente atto e da essa Signora [illegible] prodotti.

Il presente atto è stato letto alla dichiarante ed a' testimoni, ed indi si è firmato da noi [illegible]

[illegible]

Il Parroco di ci à restituito nel dì di anno corrente il notamento che gli abbiamo rimesso nel dì anno suddetto in piè del quale à indicato che il Sacramento del battesimo è stato amministrato a Luisa Piccarreta nel giorno del quale si è accusato la ricezione.

L' Uffiziale dello Stato Civile

[illegible]

ANNOTAZIONE DI MORTE

Piccarreta Luisa

è morta in Corato il 4-3-1947

anno 1947

Corato 21 MAR 1947

L'UFFICIALE DELLO STATO CIVILE

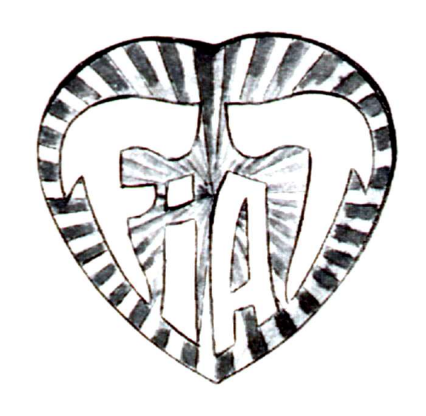
Luisa's birth certificate



Luisa's room and the Altar

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N.B. All notes are taken from "Quaderno delle Memorie di Infanzia (Notebook of Childhood Memories)" edited by Father Pablo Martin Sanguiao.



Pro Manuscripto

Prayer Group

“ Divino Volere Divino Amore ”

(Divine Will and Divine Love)

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Non commercial edition

February 2021